





Enquirer, which has expressed no opinion, excepted.

Illinois—Quincy Herald, Bloomington, *Flag*, *State Register*, *Chicago Times*, *Galena Courier*, *Peoria News*, *Peoria Bulletin*, *Rock Island Argus*, and some thirty-four others, (weeklies,) being the entire Democratic press of the State. The Democracy represented by these papers, and whose sentiments are uttered by them, polled at the last election, for Mr. Buchanan, 535,000.

We have omitted the State of New York, whose Democratic press, with the exception of the *Albany Argus* and *Rochester Union*—the editors of which are shortly to be made office-holders—denounce this Kansas mania; we have omitted Massachusetts and New Hampshire the leading presses of which, the *Boston Post* and *New Hampshire Patriot*, both oppose Calhoun's Constitution; we have omitted Pennsylvania, who, under the lead of Forney, guarded the home of our standard bearer in 1856, and secured a victory to our flag; we have omitted the thousands who might be enumerated in the States as standing shoulder to shoulder with their brethren of the Northwest.

## WASHINGTON, D. C.

THURSDAY, DECEMBER 17, 1857.

### THE NATIONAL ERA.

We are constantly informed of concerning our subscriptions. It is just as well to be frank with our friends. From present appearances, we expect to lose about one-third of our list. Our subscribers lead "hard times," and all we have to say, is, they are still harder with us.

The *New York Herald*, a warm supporter of Mr. Buchanan, announces, with great delight, that its receipts, since the advent of the monetary troubles, are larger than ever.

We have said enough to show our friends how deeply the *Era* is suffering. It is a topic on which we shall not enlarge.

### TIME OF SUBSCRIPTION EXTENDED.

Notwithstanding the "hard times," and the prospect of a diminished list, we shall favor our subscribers, at the close of the present volume, with an extra number of the *Era*, containing a copious *Index*, together with our usual variety of reading matter.

So that our subscribers will receive, this year, fifty-three numbers, instead of fifty-two, which will make the volume close December 31, 1857.

### MR. DOUGLAS, THE ADMINISTRATION AND THE SOUTH.

The position of Mr. Douglas in relation to the Administration and the South, is the subject of much comment. In his speech last week, he was at pains to show that, as to the general principles of the President's message concerning the Kansas Question, there was no difference between him and the Executive; that it contained indeed a forcible argument in favor of submitting the Constitution formed at Leocompton to the popular vote. But, at this point commenced the difference. The President, willing to overlook the departure from this policy, on the ground that the main question in controversy had been submitted by the Convention, was in favor of accepting the Constitution. Mr. Douglas dissented from this, and was pleased to remark that, although the President had waived his objections to the action of the Convention, still, he did not recommend their work to the adoption of Congress, but simply submitted it, with an expression of his opinion.

In terms, this was a correct statement of the case; but, in fact, the policy of recognizing the Leocompton Convention and accepting its Constitution, is an Administration measure. Nay, it is the Administration measure, for there is no other to which it is committed, which seems to have any prominence or to excite any interest. Had there been a doubt on this point, the prompt advocacy by Mr. Bigler of the Leocompton Constitution, the deep displeasure evinced by Messrs. Davis, Mason, and Brown, at the course of Mr. Douglas, and the assumption throughout the debate following his speech, that the Administration was committed to the support of the Constitution, must have dispelled it.

Mr. Douglas is therefore openly arrayed against this leading Administration measure; and, we assume, that neither he nor the President will give way. For the present, and so long as the question of recognizing or rejecting the Leocompton Constitution shall be the issue, they must stand opposed to each other. Mr. Buchanan will command the entire Democratic vote of the South, probably a portion of its Native American vote, and, so far as we are informed, a majority of the Democratic members from the free States. Mr. Douglas will be sustained by the entire Republican vote, a portion of the Democratic vote from the North, and probably a few of the Native American votes from the South. We speak of the Senate.

Where then does Mr. Douglas stand? Where will he stand in future? Shall the Party of Slavery decide this question for him, or will he decide it for himself?

CHAPLAINS.—It will be observed by our Congressional proceedings, that both Houses have declined this year to elect Chaplains, and passed resolutions inviting clergymen of this city to make arrangements for the necessary services. It is regarded, we suppose, as an experiment; and if it work well, the practice of electing Chaplains will be discontinued.

PRINTING.—The Democratic caucus candidate for Printer, Mr. Steadman, of Ohio, was elected. In the proceedings connected with the election, complaints were freely made against the enormous expenses of Printing, which reached, during the last Congress, two millions. Whose fault is it? That of members of Congress, who have taken to the business of book publishing with extraordinary energy. A committee was appointed to investigate the whole subject of printing—expensive, abuses, &c. We hope it may be able to recommend some salutary reform.

HOUSE-BILL.—Mr. Grow, of Pennsylvania, deserves thanks for his prompt movement in favor of a Homestead Bill. From year to year he has worked for this beneficent measure: we hope that this time he may prove successful.

THE NEW SPEAKER.—Colonel Orr, the new Speaker, is one of the ablest men in Congress, and perhaps the most capable man for the Speaker's chair in the Democratic ranks. He has served three terms in the House, and is well fitted for his post by an extensive experience. An exchange sketches his appearance and manner in the following brief fashion: "Colonel Orr is a man about forty, of large frame, of a ruddy complexion, and with a set of lungs of immense power. When he rises to catch the Speaker's attention, his shrill voice rises above the hum of the House like the whistle of a locomotive. He is singularly prompt, quick-witted in argument and retort, and pays the closest attention to every detail of House business. The duldest and prosiest debater can boast of an attentive listener in Orr; and it is rather ominous to a new-comer in debate, when that flat-headed South Carolinian, with a threadbare faded black coat, leans forward, puts one hand to his ear, cooks his eye towards the new member, like a contemplative rooster looking after clear weather, and asks whether he rightly understood the last remark of the honorable gentleman, and, if so, would like to inquire, &c., &c. It is quite an ordeal to go through."

AN ENABLING BILL.—Mr. Douglas has given notice of a bill to authorize the people of Kansas to form a State Constitution. This is undoubtedly the true policy in the present state of affairs. Let Kansas be treated as Minnesota and Oregon were treated. In fact, it were well to agree upon this policy of enabling bills as a general usage in the case of Territories seeking to become States.

Reject the Leocompton fraud, and pass an enabling act, and the cloud which now threatens civil war will pass away.

Party of the South, understanding the case no less clearly, may abstain from an act of proscription, which must leave the South without an efficient ally, and place it under the control of the Disunionists.

How was the Democratic Party in the free States enabled to react against the first effects of the Kansas Nebraska act? By taking its stand on the doctrine of Popular Sovereignty and persuading its adherents that to leave the People of a Territory free to accept or reject Slavery, was a sound Democratic doctrine, identical with the right of self-government, and that its operation would be sure to work for the extension of Freedom. On no other ground could the Party have been revived or held together.

This was the all-powerful argument of Mr. Douglas, by which he maintained at once his Party and himself. Its soundness, and the necessity of the policy it implied, were recognized by the Administration and its supporters, North and South, in relation to Kansas affairs. Mr. Douglas and his Northern associates, confident that it would be carried out, looked forward to growing power and popularity. The Legislature which was to decide whether he should be re-elected to the Senate of the United States would be chosen on the heels of the anticipated triumph of Popular Sovereignty in Kansas—and soon after would commence the preparations for the Presidential struggle of 1860.

The prospects were flattering; but in an evil hour, mischievous counsels prevail—Popular Sovereignty is trampled under foot in the field where its triumph had been predicted, and, what is worse than all, the Administration and the South, utterly regardless of their own commitments, and of the necessities of Mr. Douglas and the Democratic Party at the North, have made themselves accomplices in the outrage. Were Mr. Douglas to ratify the Leocompton fraud, he knows that not only he must go down under the indignation of his constituents, but his Party must go down under a fearful retribution in 1860.

By resistance, he may save himself; and if his resistance be effectual, he may also save his Party.

Can it be that Southern Senators are stupidly blind to all these considerations? That the Slave Power is a hard master, remembers no services, except as the foundation of additional exactions, and is reckless how many may be victims in the attempt to execute its demands, we all know; but it is prepared to exact from Stephen A. Douglas and his Party at the North a service which, if rendered, must overwhelm them with disgrace and ruin?

It is quite possible a milder course may be attempted. The case of Mr. Douglas may be regarded as necessarily exceptional. He may be allowed to work against the Leocompton Constitution, without losing his position in his Party, while the Administration will be content if he can secure enough support from the North to carry through the measure. It may be thought that this will secure Mr. Douglas at home, and that he may then be able to serve his Party.

Would he be satisfied with such terms? Could he hope ever to be reinstated in the full confidence of the South? Could he expect by so ambiguous a policy to appease discontents at home, to disarm the Republicans, or, occupying a position antagonistic to the Administration on a leading measure, to escape the opposition of a portion of his Party devoted to the Administration? Is he indeed a man of half-way measures, or rather is he not disposed to be decided and unqualified one way or the other? His antecedents, his former determined commitments, the pride of consistency, his popularity in his own Party, his uniform implacable hostility to Republicanism, are formidable obstacles to his union with them—but what is he to do?

There are but two Parties in the country—the one now wielding the powers of the Federal Government in favor of Slavery, whether that interest is to be promoted by Popular Sovereignty, or in defiance of it; the other, the Republican Party, which is committed to the support of Freedom, whatever form of the issue may be presented, that issue at present being Popular Sovereignty.

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THE EXTREMISTS, or "fire-eaters," as they are called, understand all this perfectly well, and are in favor of driving matters to extremes—for this Northern alliance with the Democratic Party, they hold, only delays the beneficent and necessary measure of disunion. The Buchanan

instrument was thought, even by its best friends, a miserable affair; yet some, fearing a worse one, should another trial be made, voted for it. There was a majority of twenty-five against Slavery, and of about forty against the free negro clause.

### THE LECOMPTON CONSTITUTION.

This paper, which Mr. Buchanan, it is said, thinks a pre-eminent good! Constitution, is published in the *Intelligencer* of this city. We cannot spare room for it at present.

It provides, in relation to the Governor and Lieutenant Governor, that "they shall be at least thirty years of age, shall have been citizens of the United States twenty years, and shall have been residents of Kansas at least five years next preceding the day of election."

Is it the Know Nothing favor of this provision that so delights Mr. Buchanan?

Power is conferred on the Legislature to incorporate one bank of discount and issue, but not more than two branches: in other words, to confer the exclusive privilege of banking upon a single corporation. And yet, the bill of rights, a part of the same Constitution, declares that "all freemen, when they form a social compact, are equal in rights, and that no man or set of men is entitled to exclusive separate public emoluments, or privileges, but in consideration of public service."

In the bill of rights it is declared that "free negroes shall not be permitted to live in the State under any circumstances." Mr. Douglas, in his speech on the 12th, remarked that he did not prohibit the immigration of free negroes, but did not interfere with those already residing in the State. This class of persons may at times become the subjects of oppression in the slave States, but no State has yet disgraced itself by the cruelty of driving them out. It was reserved for the Leocompton Convention, so highly favored by Mr. Buchanan, to attempt this infernal outrage.

The article in relation to Slavery is as follows:

#### "ARTICLE VII.—Slavery.

"SEC. 1. The right of property is before and higher than any constitutional sanction, and the right of the owner of a slave to such slave and its increase is the same and as inviolable as the right of the owner of any property whatever."

"SEC. 2. The Legislature shall have no power to pass laws for the emancipation of slaves, without the consent of the owners, or without paying the full value of the slaves to their emancipators, as long as any person of the same age and description shall be continued in Slavery by the laws of this State; provided that such person or slave be the bona fide property of such emigrant; and provided, also, that laws may be passed prohibiting the introduction into this State of slaves who have committed high crimes in other States or Territories. They shall have power to pass laws to permit the owners of slaves to emancipate them, saving the right of the State to require their emancipators to pay full value in money for the slaves so emancipated. 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